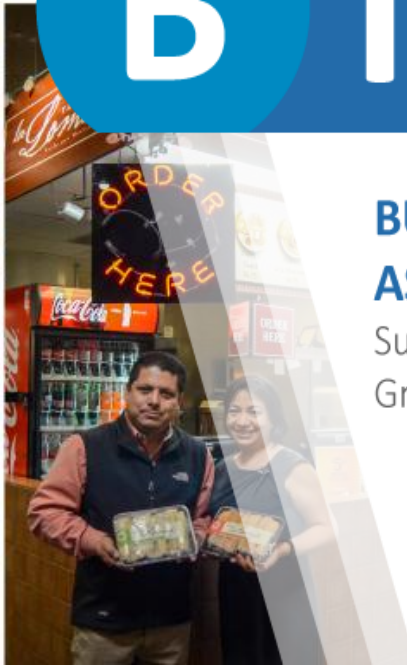


  
**Minneapolis**  
City of Lakes

**B TAP**



**BUSINESS TECHNICAL  
ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

Supporting Business  
Growth in the City of Minneapolis

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**  
**2016 Funding Round**

# Request for Proposals

2016 Funding Round



## CITY OF MINNEAPOLIS COMMUNITY PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BUSINESS TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM B-TAP REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

The City of Minneapolis is seeking proposals from local non-profit organizations that provide direct business technical assistance services and training to small businesses and microenterprises located in Minneapolis. The total funding available for the Business Technical Assistance Program (B-TAP) in 2016 is \$575,000, and we expect to receive multiple proposals. During the contracting process, the selected service providers and the City will agree upon the contract outcomes and deliverables. These will be outcomes-based contracts for up to two years. Recipients will submit quarterly invoices in accordance with the terms of their contracts. Contract payments are based on successful completion of the outcomes in the contract (see **Exhibit A** for contract Scope of Services template).

### 2. OBJECTIVES

The goal of the Business Technical Assistance Program (B-TAP) is to help small, Minneapolis-based businesses start or expand and support job creation in the city. B-TAP also helps to address economic and racial disparities given the demographics of its participants with high representation from women and entrepreneurs of color.

For the 2016 funding round, B-TAP has the following objectives:

- Provide services to evaluate business ideas and to prepare prospective entrepreneurs interested in opening a business in the city.
- Provide financial and technical support to successfully operate a new business in the city of Minneapolis.
- Provide technical assistance tools to retain existing business in the city of Minneapolis.
- Support business growth, job creation, and real estate acquisition for existing businesses conducting operations in the city of Minneapolis.

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### 3. PROGRAM DETAILS (See exhibit “B” for program updates)

Funding for the Business Technical Assistance Program has four categories. Organizations may apply for one or more categories. Your proposal should clearly indicate which category or categories you are applying for.

- **Category A:** \$100,000 for business feasibility and readiness, up to \$25,000 per provider
- **Category B:** \$150,000 for new business development, up to \$50,000 per provider
- **Category C:** \$ 175,000 for general technical assistance for existing businesses (retention), up to \$25,000 per provider
- **Category D:** \$150,000 to support business growth (expansion), up to \$50,000 per provider
- **Bonus:** Up to \$25,000 for Disadvantaged Business Enterprise certification, \$1,000 per business

#### a. **New CATEGORY A – BUSINESS FEASIBILITY AND READINESS (\$100,000 available funding / \$25,000 cap)**

The selected service provider will provide one-on-one consultation and/or group training and prepare prospective entrepreneurs to open a business in Minneapolis. B-TAP will pay up to \$50 per hour for technical assistance or training, up to 10 hours per entrepreneur. Service providers must provide a feasibility report showing how the provided services guided the prospective entrepreneur to decide whether or not to open a business. Activities may include, but are not limited to: business plan writing classes, business readiness assessments, market studies, and one-on-one technical assistance.

To be reimbursed, City Staff will request the following documentation:

- Category A report (exhibit C)
- CDBG Income verification form (exhibit C)

#### b. **CATEGORY B – NEW BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT (\$150,000 available funding / \$50,000 cap)**

The selected service provider will provide one-on-one consultation, group training and/or networking opportunities to develop new businesses located in the city of Minneapolis. B-TAP will pay up to \$5,000 for every new business created in Minneapolis. Service providers must demonstrate how the provided services made a significant contribution to the development of the new business.

To be reimbursed, City Staff will request the following documentation:

- Category B report (exhibit C)
- CDBG Income verification form (exhibit C)

#### c. **CATEGORY C – BUSINESS RETENTION (\$175,000 available funding / \$25,000 cap)**

The selected service provider will provide one-on-one consultation to existing Minneapolis businesses to retain existing jobs and improve operations. B-TAP will pay up to \$75 per hour for technical assistance, up to 20 hours per business. Service providers must report how the provided services made a significant contribution toward business retention. Technical Assistance is not limited to low income individuals.

To be reimbursed, City Staff will request the following documentation:

- Category C report (exhibit C)
- CDBG Income verification form, if applicable (exhibit C)

#### d. **CATEGORY D – TARGETED BUSINESS GROWTH (\$150,000 available funding / \$50,000 cap)**

The selected service provider will provide one-on-one consultation, group training and/or networking opportunities to businesses that result in new jobs created, physical expansion, or substantial sales

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growth. Businesses must be located in Minneapolis. The contractor must demonstrate how the provided services made a significant contribution to the business growth. B-TAP will pay \$5,000 for each business successfully served.

To be reimbursed, City Staff will request the following documentation:

- Category D report (exhibit C)
- Proof of significant outcome: financial statements, job creation documentation, or real estate transaction.

**e. BONUS DOLLARS: DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS ENTERPRISE (DBE) CERTIFICATION (\$25,000 available funding/ \$1,000 each)**

Service providers may be eligible to receive a bonus for each business assisted that obtains a DBE certification under the Minnesota Unified Certification Program. Bonus dollars will operate under a first-come, first-served basis until available funds are exhausted. To receive bonus dollars, assisted businesses must provide a copy of the DBE certification. Click here for more details on the [DBE program](#).

**f. PROGRAM DETAILS SUMMARY**

Category	Type of Business	Total Available Funding	Unit Price	Max hours per Business	Expected # of Businesses
A	Business Feasibility	\$100,000.00	\$ 50.00 per hour	10	2000 Hours (Approx. 200 Businesses)
B	New Businesses	\$ 150,000.00	\$ 5,000.00 per Business	N/A	30 new businesses
C	Business Retention	\$ 175,000.00	\$ 75.00 per hour	20	2333 Hours (Approx. 117 Businesses)
D	Business Expansion	\$ 150,000.00	\$ 5,000.00 per Business	N/A	30 business expansions
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$ 575,000.00</b>			<b>377 businesses</b>

Note: All the categories are mutually exclusive. For example if a client is claimed under category "A", it cannot be claimed under category "B", "C" or "D" in the same funding round.

**g. CDBG REQUIREMENTS: (apply to categories "A", "B" and some of "C").**

Federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds support neighborhood revitalization, economic development and improved community facilities and services. The City of Minneapolis is deploying a portion of its allocation of these funds to increase the level of technical assistance available to Minneapolis-based businesses that can be specifically categorized as microenterprises. By definition, microenterprises have 5 or fewer employees with at least one being the business owner.

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It is important that applicants understand that CDBG funds must be used only to serve persons qualifying as low- and moderate-income individuals that own or wish to establish a microenterprise. Organizations must be able to collect information on each person receiving assistance, including, but not limited to, data on the individual's family size and income. The City will not reimburse any organization that fails to document and support the established criteria.

### **h. CONTRACT TERM**

Recognizing the lead time for business starts and expansions, the contracts will be for up to two years in duration. Contract dollars can be drawn on a quarterly basis as services are provided and outcomes achieved. The City reserves the right to evaluate the contract performance at the end of year one, and terminate the contract early if the contractor has low performance at the end of year one.

## **4. ELIGIBILITY**

### **a. Eligible Areas**

The program is available throughout the city of Minneapolis.

### **b. Eligible Activities**

Eligible activities support the economic vitality of local small businesses and microenterprises through one-on-one technical assistance, group training, or networking opportunities which may include, but is not limited to: support writing a business plans, marketing and/or strategic planning, assistance with business registration, license application, and other business set up and regulatory tasks; access to capital by preparing loan packages, cash flow projections and providing financial coaching; general training in business management; real estate acquisition or lease agreements; and training in effective bidding and estimating; business certifications; employee management; marketing support; website design; and legal services.

### **Eligible Organizations**

Eligible organizations include non-profit organizations that have demonstrated capacity to perform the business consulting work. This includes staff (or consultants) with experience providing business development, establishment and expansion assistance, and experience managing contracts.

## **5. PROPOSAL CONTENTS**

Be sure to review and address the evaluation criteria (see page #6) in your answers. **Please be concise.**

### **Cover Page:**

- A cover page that includes the following information:
  - a. Applicant's name, mailing address, and federal ID number.
  - b. Contact person's name, title, phone number, and e-mail address.
  - c. Category or categories for which you are applying (A, B, C, D or some combination).
  - d. Signature of an individual authorized to sign on behalf of the proposing organization.

Please number your answers and provide succinct narrative that addresses the following.

### **a. Organizational background, capacity and historical performance:**

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- What is the organization's mission, vision and objectives?
- What are the organization's main accomplishments in the city of Minneapolis?
- What is the organization's experience in accomplishing a similar scope of work?
- How many businesses are served by the organization each year? (Provide the numbers for each category you are applying for.)
- If your organization currently has a B-TAP contract, please discuss your performance outcomes. (if not, describe the organization's experience working with similar contracts.)

**b. Business skills, tools and systems:**

- What is the organization's main area of expertise?
- Who will be the program manager?
- Who are the business consultants and trainers who will provide the services? (Provide a brief description of their area of expertise and qualifications. If the work will be done through a private consultant, identify that consultant (or pool) and provide the consultants' qualifications.)
- What are the tools that the organization uses to assure the success of the entrepreneurs (e.g. curriculum, web designing platforms, trainings, mentorship programs, etc.)?
- What systems are in place to assure quality of services and evaluating of service outcomes?

**c. Program approach and service model**

- How is the service delivered to entrepreneurs? (Delivery includes how the services will be marketed and to whom and how participants will be selected)
- If the organization is unable to assist a client, will the client be referred to another service provider or to a workforce training provider? If so, please describe your referral process and network.

**d. Target Population:**

- What is the organization's experience strengthening the economic vitality in areas with high levels of unemployment, concentration of low income residents, and high building vacancy in the City?
- Does the organization have experience working with economically disadvantaged businesses?

**e. Program Timeline**

- Provide a program timeline reflecting expected activities and outcomes per quarter. (Remember that the length of the contract is up to 2 years and the invoices must be submitted quarterly).

**f. Program Budget**

- Provide a program budget with narrative. (**Exhibit D**). If your organization will collaborate with other partners, then describe how they will be compensated.
- Provide a copy of the organization's general budget for 2015 and 2016.

**g. Other Information**

- Any other information that would help City staff understand and evaluate the concept. If your organization has experience working with CDBG funds, please provide a narrative of your experience and familiarity with the documentation process.

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Your proposal must include an executed “Consent for Release of Response Data” form (**Exhibit E**), included in this RFP document. Proposals that do not include an executed “Consent for Release of Response Data” form shall be considered incomplete. Omission is grounds for rejection of the entire proposal.

The contents of the proposal and any response clarification of the proposal contents submitted by the successful proposer may become part of the contractual obligation and be incorporated by reference into the contract between the proposer and the City.

### 6. EVALUATION CRITERIA

In reviewing Business Technical Assistance Program proposals, the review team will consider the following criteria. The maximum score a proposal can receive is 100.

- a. **Organizational background, capacity and historical performance (20 points)**: Do the mission, vision and objectives align with City goals? How established is the organization? Does the organization have a track record serving businesses and the ability to keep appropriate documentation?
- b. **Business skills, tools and systems (25 points)**: Does the organization have the structure in place to begin delivering services immediately? What is the organizational capacity to provide business consulting services? What are the qualifications of the business consultants (or how will the capacity be expanded)? What is the organization’s intake and screening process? Does the organization have the experience and capacity to conduct the work proposed? What is the quality of reports already provided (applies only to current B-TAP service providers)?
- c. **Program approach and service model (25 points)**: Are the proposed activities the most effective way to deliver technical assistance to Minneapolis-based businesses? Proposals that show a strong service model will score higher. What are some specialized services provided by this organization? Does the organization currently have an evaluation methodology in place? Does the organization measure impact? The contract performance of current B-TAP providers will be evaluated.
- d. **Target Population (20 points)**: What is the experience of this organization working with specific target populations (geographical, ethnic, language, gender, etc.)? How does the organization strengthen the economic vitality in areas with high levels of unemployment, concentration of low income residents and high building vacancy in the city?
- e. **Program timeline, budget and leverage (10 points)**: Is the proposed timeline realistic? Do the City funds leverage other funding? Leveraged funds are those that are committed by your organization and/or others to the specific activities in your proposal.

The City may, in its sole discretion, expand or reduce the criteria upon which it bases its final decisions.

### 7. RFP SUBMISSION AND TIMELINE

#### a. **Proposal Submission and Deadline**

Applicants must submit one unbound copy and five bound or stapled copies of the proposal and one electronic version. Proposals must be on standard 8½” by 11” paper. All supporting documentation must

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be on paper no larger than 11" by 17". Proposals and supporting documentation must be submitted in a sealed envelope labeled "Business Technical Assistance Program Proposal." Additionally, a copy of your application can be submitted by email [RFP.Responses@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:RFP.Responses@minneapolismn.gov) (up to 10mb file), with subject "B-TAP RFP". Submissions will not be returned.

### b. RFP Deadline

Proposals shall be delivered to the City on or before:

**January 22th, 2016, 4:00 pm**

To:

*City of Minneapolis - Procurement*

**Request for Proposals for:**

**B-TAP RFP**

330 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue South, Suite 552

*Minneapolis, MN 55401*

**Proposals received after the deadline will not be accepted.** It is neither CPED's responsibility nor practice to acknowledge receipt of any proposal. It is the responder's responsibility to assure that a proposal is received in a timely manner. Please make sure your proposal is complete.

### c. RFP Inquiries

Prospective responders should direct questions by email to the department contact person:

[Daniel.bonilla@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:Daniel.bonilla@minneapolismn.gov)

City of Minneapolis Community Planning and Economic Development

All questions are due no later than January 8th, 2016 at 4:00pm. Questions and responses will be posted on the CPED web site ([www.minneapolismn.gov/cped/cped\\_rfp](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/cped/cped_rfp)) by January 11<sup>th</sup>, 4pm. The department contact person cannot vary the terms of the RFP. **An informational meeting will be held on January 8th, 2016 from 10:30 – 11:30** at the Crown Roller Mill building located at 105 Fifth Ave. South, Suite 150. Attendance is recommended but not required.

### d. Review and Selection Process

A committee of City staff and partner organizations will review proposals and make a recommendation to City Council for funding.

**The City reserves the right to reject any or all proposals or parts of proposals, negotiate modifications to an entire proposal or specific components of the scope of work within a proposal to create a project of lesser or greater magnitude than described in this RFP or the submitted proposal.**

### e. Anticipated Timeline

RFP Issued:

December 21st, 2015

Informational meeting:

January 8th, 2016

Questions due:

January 8th, 2016

Submission deadline for proposals:

January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2016

Staff evaluation of proposals:

January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2016

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Recommendation to City Council  
Contracting:

February-March 2016  
February- March 2016

### f. Contracts

This is a reimbursable performance-based contract. Organizations with contracts will submit invoices for payment for the delivery of outcomes in accordance with the terms of their contracts. During the contracting period, organizations will work with City contract managers to develop a Scope of Services (see Exhibit A). The Scope of Services will be the basis for contract payments. By signing the contract the organization is committing to **completion of all of the deliverables** in the Scope of Services.

### 8. CITY CONTRACTING REQUIREMENTS

The selected contractor will be expected to sign a Grand Contract Agreement (Exhibits F for details, terms and conditions). The City reserves the right to update the contract forms as necessary to comply with laws regulations and ordinances.

### 9. EXHIBITS

- A. Scope of Services template
- B. B-TAP program updates
- C. Reports package (all categories)
- D. Budget template\*
- E. Form of Consent for Release of Response Data\*
- F. Contract templates

\*submit with your application